



Welcome to the Ground Plane April 2003 Issue

APRIL SBARA MEETING ACTIVITY

This month is the annual SBARA homebrew night. We invite all members to bring one or more projects they have built to put on display and share with the rest of us. We are expanding the evening's activity to include any antique or old and interesting ham equipment that you either collect or just happen to have in your possession. We will put all the antique and homebrew equipment you bring on a display table and each person will have a chance to describe their 'jewel' to the members attending this fun ham radio evening.

Don't be bashful... Bring something. Weather you built it or not is not the only focus this year. Any amateur radio item that you have of interest that you can bring will make the evening a bigger success. So, look around your ham shack and find one item to display at the SBARA meeting on Wednesday April 16th at 7:30PM.

SBARA Meeting

SBARA meets every third Wednesday at 7:30 PM at the Community Center in Fremont.

NEW HAMS

Here are the latest new hams that live in Fremont. Let's welcome them to the SBARA community.

KG6PCL

Glenn E Reynolds
350 Mayhews Rd
Fremont CA 94536

KG6PBU

Dennis S Enjian
4457 Alameda Dr
Fremont CA 94536-5703

KG6PBT

Charles L Church
42467 Greenbrier Park Dr
Fremont CA 94538-3986

Dennis Franklin, K6DF

ARRL East Bay Section Manager

What's In This Issue

What's in this issue will return next month....

Amateur Radio Happenings



EMCOMMWEST-2003 will be held in Reno on May 31, 2003.

This ARRL/ARES sponsored event is oriented toward emergency communications.

For additional information visit —
<http://www.cvrc.net/emcommwest/>



PACIFICON 2003 will be held at the Marriott Hotel in San Ramon California.

PACIFICON is the ARRL's Pacific Division convention. This year it will be held from October 17th through the 19th. Again, we will be bringing in great speakers, offering ham radio classes and testing to the public and sponsoring technology forums throughout the entire weekend.

For additional information visit —
<http://www.pacificon.org>

Amateur Radio Service

The amateur and amateur-satellite services are for qualified persons of any age who are interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest. These services present an opportunity for self-training, intercommunication, and technical investigations. You can read more [about amateur radio services](#) including information about the [Sequential Call Sign System](#), [vanity call signs](#), [communications](#), and more.

Information—<http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/amateur/>

The ARRL Letter

Vol. 22, No. 13

March 28, 2003

GEORGIA HAMS RESPOND IN AFTERMATH OF KILLER TORNADO

Amateur Radio operators in southwestern Georgia this week helped their neighbors and relief agencies in the wake of a tornado March 20 that left six people dead and 200 or more injured--dozens seriously. Georgia Gov Sonny Perdue declared a state of emergency in Mitchell and Worth counties--located south of the City of Albany. According to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA), the tornado rendered dozens of houses uninhabitable and damaged many others. Upward of two dozen amateurs have been assisting responding organizations including the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief. Albany Metro Area SKYWARN had activated earlier in response to severe weather warnings.

"ARES members of the Albany Amateur Radio Club--who are just about all Red Cross volunteers--have been taking emergency response vehicles (ERVs) to the affected areas to feed victims and provide vital communications," said ARRL Lee County Emergency Coordinator Bob Smith, K4PHE, who's also a Red Cross communications officer. Other hams helped with damage assessment, shelter communications and other duties. Several ARES members volunteered continuously for several days after the tornadoes struck.

By week's end, ARES District 7 (Southwestern Georgia) Emergency Coordinator J.D. Goings, AA4P, reported that the amateurs' response to the tornado in Mitchell County--the worst hit area--was winding down. Goings was among those supporting the Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief team as a communicator for the clean-up and recovery and cooking units. "There is a lot of damage, and it is widespread," he indicated, adding that ARES members did "a fantastic job" helping out in Mitchell and Worth counties.

Two fatalities occurred in Worth County, and four others died in Mitchell County, according to GEMA.

Dougherty County EC Arthur Shipley, N4GPJ, the disaster chairman for the Southwest Georgia Chapter of the American Red Cross, organized Red Cross and ARES operations. The Red Cross established a shelter at Mitchell County Middle School on March 21, and N4GPJ set up a 2-meter station to coordinate communications from there. The shelter closed March 22.

Goings and Red Cross EC Dale Culp, W1BPP, deployed to the Baptist church in Camilla with the Georgia Baptist feeding unit. They set up a mobile communications trailer with radios on the Albany Repeater--the primary communications frequency. They also erected an antenna and a UHF repeater for local communication. Smith said the tornado took a northeasterly path from Camilla through Worth County, destroying several other homes in its path. "The devastation in Camilla was unbelievable," he said. "This tornado hit the same homes that were destroyed and then rebuilt when a tornado hit Camilla in 2000." The Valentine's Day 2000 storm claimed 11 lives.

FCC PROPOSES TO HIKE VANITY CALL SIGN FEE

The FCC has proposed increasing the regulatory fee to apply for, renew or reinstate an Amateur Radio vanity call sign from \$14.50 to \$16.30 this fall. The Commission included the new fee in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2003" (MD 03-83), released March 26. The closing date for comments on the new fee schedule is April 25. Reply comments are due by May 5.

"We estimate that 9800 applicants will apply for vanity call signs in FY2003," the FCC said in its NPRM. That's up by 800 from FY2002. The agency expects to collect revenues of nearly \$160,000, an increase of almost \$30,000 from FY2002.

If all goes as it has in the past, the FCC will adopt a Report and Order on the FY2003 fee schedule this summer, and the new fee will become effective sometime in early September.

The FCC NPRM also seeks comments on its efforts to review, streamline and modernize its fee assessment and collection processes and procedures. "We welcome comments on a broad range of options in this regard," the FCC said. Areas of particular interest include suggestions for improvement in the agency's electronic payment system.

Applicants for amateur vanity call signs will continue to pay the \$14.50 regulatory fee per call sign (per 10-year license term) until the FY2003 fee schedule becomes effective. The FCC has said in the past that because it continues to incur costs related to vanity call signs even after their issuance or renewal, it believes a regulatory fee at renewal is appropriate. Interested parties may comment via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) <<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>>. Enter "03-83" in the "Proceeding" field. The FCC said it expected to have the docket available by March 28 for the posting of electronic comments.

Electronic comments by e-mail also are welcome. To receive filing instructions for e-mail comments, send an e-mail to ecfs@fcc.gov and include the words "get form <your e-mail address>" in the message body. The ECFS will reply with a sample form and directions on filing comments.

A copy of the FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making is available on the FCC Web site <http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-03-64A1.doc>.

ASTRONAUT PHILOSOPHIZES ON MANKIND'S PLACE DURING ARISS QSO

Astronaut Don Pettit, KD5MDT, told students at an Australian school that humans are more like passengers on Earth than stewards of the planet. Pettit commented during an Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) contact March 19 with students at St Ursula's Girl's College in Toowoomba, Queensland.

"Mankind's place in the universe, from this experience I believe, it reminds you that men are not the stewards of Earth but more like we are passengers on Earth," Pettit said via NA1SS, "and the planet will go about its business regardless of what human beings do, and we just need to make sure as human beings that we do things wisely and don't mess things up for ourselves."

During the QSO, Pettit also confirmed that Earth is, indeed, a sphere and not flat. "If you view the earth with the unaided eye, it's difficult to detect the presence of humans," he said in response to another question.

Pettit--who had served as crew spokesperson for most Expedition 6 ARISS contacts--also addressed the issue of privacy between male and female residents onboard the ISS. "Out of necessity, we can't have separate facilities up here," he explained. "So male and female astronauts have to share the same bathroom and the same shower and all those facilities. You have very little privacy up here."

Pettit managed to answer 15 questions put to him by 11 St Ursulas's students, who ranged in age from 13 to 17. Teacher Jason Contarini said the students had competed to participate on the basis of questions submitted in advance. Handling the contact was ARISS Earth station veteran Tony Hutchison, VK5ZAI, in Kingston, South Australia. Tim Bosma, W6ISS, moderated, and WorldCom provided the teleconferencing circuit.

ARISS is an international program with participation by ARRL, NASA and AMSAT. For more information, visit the ARISS Web site <<http://ariss.gsfc.nasa.gov/>>.



Packet Radio Demo

Can you guess who these Hams are?

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The Ground Plane

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